



# sampleproclamations

## Official Proclamations

Engaging local government officials to participate in your **National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)** activities is a way to attract attention and show that local authorities support your celebration. Asking local government officials and agencies to sign a proclamation designating September as **Recovery Month** has been a successful way to encourage their participation. In fact, more than 125 proclamations were issued in support of **Recovery Month** in 2005.

A proclamation is a simple and effective way for the government to show support for educating the community about stigma and discrimination against people with substance use disorders and the need to break down these barriers. It can also draw attention to the effects of these disorders on family members and the need to support recovery programs for all who are affected.

Proclamations can be issued by governors, state legislators, and city, county, or town officials, as well as federal government officials. The President of the United States has issued a **Recovery Month** proclamation for the last several years. For a list of places where **Recovery Month** proclamations were issued in 2005, please visit the **Recovery Month** Web site to view the scanned proclamations at [www.recoverymonth.gov/2005/proclamations.aspx](http://www.recoverymonth.gov/2005/proclamations.aspx). You can also find proclamations from previous years by clicking on the “Our Successes” link on the main **Recovery Month** Web site and selecting the “Highlights and Accomplishments” link.

## Remember These Tips...

When you want an official to sign your proclamation, please take the following steps:

1. **Write** your proclamation *before* you reach out to government officials. To make the process run smoothly, the official’s staff needs to know what you want them to support. Please refer to the tips for writing proclamations later in this document or use the sample proclamations included in this planning toolkit.
2. **Research** the appropriate official or staff member to contact. Pick an official who has been a supporter of treatment services and recovery in the past or one you can meet with to discuss the importance of treatment and recovery issues.
3. **Call** the main office for the official. Ask to speak to the staff member in charge of handling the official’s proclamations. When inquiring about an official’s interest in issuing a **Recovery Month**

proclamation, contact a member of his or her communications office three to four months in advance of your event so you have adequate time to determine the appropriate process. It is important to remember that some officials are not in town during the summer months, so you may need to plan even further in advance to secure a signature for your proclamation.

4. **Introduce *Recovery Month*** and the details about your activities. Include how your activities are relevant to the community and the importance of the official's contribution to the cause. Also convey that you are grateful and honored if they can participate by signing a proclamation. Be kind and concise.
5. **Follow up** often, as you might not hear from the official's office for days, or sometimes weeks, at a time. Do not hesitate to call to check on the status of your proclamation submission.

### Write Your Proclamation...

When writing a proclamation, there are two distinct styles to choose from. Traditional proclamations begin with a series of statements beginning with the word "Whereas," which means "because," "inasmuch as," or "since." The "Whereas" clauses state the issue or problem and suggest the reasoning behind the proclamation. They are followed by one phrase beginning with "Therefore," which is the crux of the proclamation and is where requests for specific support are made. Another acceptable style for proclamations is a more modern approach, written like a letter that ends by proclaiming September as ***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month***.

Samples of both types of proclamations can be viewed at the end of this document, on the ***Recovery Month*** Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov), and on the enclosed CD-ROM. You may use these samples as templates or write your own proclamation.

You can modify these sample proclamations by inserting information about specific substance use issues in your area, such as stigma and discrimination, as well as examples of local treatment centers for those with substance use disorders.

### Publicize the Proclamation...

Once you secure a local official to issue a proclamation, you can publicize it to maximize its usefulness.

- Send copies of the proclamation to the "local" or "metro" desks of local newspapers, along with a news release announcing that a local official has signed a proclamation. You can refer to the tips on writing a news release enclosed in this planning toolkit for examples.

- Organize a press conference either as part of or separate from your other activities, where the official signs the proclamation and copies are distributed to reporters in attendance. During this media event, you can display the proclamation by having it photo-enlarged to a poster size or framed.
- Organize a “town-hall” meeting with the official after the signing of the proclamation with a community forum featuring guest treatment providers and others who can further the message of recovery to your state’s policymakers.
- Obtain permission to display copies of the proclamation in the lobbies of public places, such as libraries and government buildings.
- Scan the proclamation and post it on your own Web site with a link to the official **Recovery Month** Web site, [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).

You are encouraged to share your plans and activities for *Recovery Month 2006* with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), your colleagues, and the general public by posting them on the official *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov). By sharing creative executions and activities, you are helping to generate momentum, thereby furthering effective outreach that will touch the lives of millions of people.

To share your outreach efforts and community success stories during *Recovery Month*, please complete the Customer Satisfaction Form in this planning toolkit. Instructions are included on the form.

Please send samples of your organization’s *Recovery Month* promotional materials to:  
Office of the Director, Consumer Affairs, SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Treatment,  
1 Choke Cherry Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Rockville, MD 20857.

Sample *Recovery Month* materials are available electronically on the CD-ROM in this planning toolkit. For additional *Recovery Month* materials, visit the *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov) or call 1-800-662-HELP. For additional information about substance use disorders, treatment, and recovery, please visit SAMHSA’s Web site at [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov).



# sampleproclamations

## SAMPLE PROCLAMATION 1: TRADITIONAL FORMAT

**WHEREAS**, 74 percent of Americans say that addiction to alcohol has had some impact on them at some point in their lives, whether it was their own personal addiction, that of a friend or family member, or any other experience with addiction; and

**WHEREAS**, a 63-percent majority of Americans also say that addiction to either drugs or alcohol has had a great deal or some impact on their lives; and

**WHEREAS**, stigma and discrimination present obstacles and can be a mark of disgrace to those with substance use disorders who need access to treatment facilities, and for those who want to reestablish their place in the community by entering the workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, educating our community about how substance use disorders affect children, families, and all community members is essential to overcoming stigma and discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, we must recognize the achievement of those who seek out treatment services and ensure that such services are readily available to those who need assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, substance use disorders are a treatable, yet serious health care problem, and we can take steps to address it and so build a stronger, healthier community; and

**WHEREAS**, to help achieve this goal, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and [the name of a treatment organization in your state or region] invite all residents of [your city or state] to participate in *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)*;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, [name and title of your elected official], by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of [name of city, state, or locality], do hereby proclaim the month of September 2006 as

### *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month*

in [name of your city or state here] and call upon the people of [name of your city or state] to observe this month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies supporting this year's theme, "*Join the Voices for Recovery: Build a Stronger, Healthier Community.*"

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this [first/other day of the month] day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

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Signature

[Insert City/State or Other Official Seal]



# sample proclamations

## SAMPLE PROCLAMATION 2: CONTEMPORARY FORMAT

Seventy-four percent of Americans say that addiction to alcohol has had some impact on them at some point in their lives, whether it was their own personal addiction, that of a friend or family member, or any other experience with addiction. This is an increase from a similar study in 2004, which said that a 63-percent majority of Americans say that addiction to either drugs or alcohol has had a great deal or some impact on their lives.

Stigma and discrimination present obstacles and can be a mark of disgrace to those with substance use disorders who need access to treatment facilities. In our community alone, more than **[number]** of **[your city or state]**'s residents have substance use disorders, and although treatment and other support services can guide them through recovery from this disease, only an estimated **[number]** have accessed our area's treatment centers.

It is vital to educate our community about the impact that substance use disorders can have on families and children. Many constituencies, such as labor and military groups and community-based organizations, can develop educational initiatives in their communities to help foster an understanding of substance use disorders and the stigma attached to these disorders.

We need to recognize the achievements of those who seek out treatment services. Furthermore, we have to ensure that these services are readily available to those who need this assistance. By raising awareness that substance use disorders can be treated just as any chronic disease is treatable, community members will be able to provide a more welcoming and supportive environment.

Substance use disorders are a serious health problem. Breaking down the barriers to treatment will not only begin the journey of recovery for many people, but will also be beneficial to the community as a whole.

For the above reasons, I am asking all citizens of **[city or state]** to join me in celebrating this September as ***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)***. This year's ***Recovery Month*** theme, ***"Join the Voices for Recovery: Build a Stronger, Healthier Community"*** encourages us all to learn about how we can help those suffering from substance use disorders receive treatment, so we can strengthen our community.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and the **[name of state, city, locality, or treatment center]** welcome your participation in ***Recovery Month***.

NOW, THEREFORE I, **[name and title of your elected official]**, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2006 as

***National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month***

in **[name of your city or state]** and encourage all residents to promote the benefits of recovery from substance use disorders and to support community treatment programs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**[Insert City/State or Other Official Seal]**